

# THE MOOSE

A PLAY IN ONE ACT

James C. Burke

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## *Characters*

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EDWIN TESTERMAN, a young executive type in his early thirties. He is very polished, proper, somewhat neurotic, and has not matured much since he was an undergraduate. A micromanager by nature, Edwin exerts most of his energy on small ideas that have no long-term application. He is a CEO wants-to-be.

MYNA TESTERMAN, Edwin's wife. She is a professional woman much like her husband, and close to him in age. Unlike Edwin, she is confident, assertive, critical, and occasionally witty. These positive qualities are offset by her impatience, selfishness, and the need for attention. She, too, has not matured far beyond her college years.

IONA BROYEUR, the trainer for Edwin and Myna Testerman. She is a tall, athletic woman with the disposition of a drill sergeant. Iona is a dutiful follower with no real leadership qualities. When left to make her own decisions on solving problems, Iona will choose a course of action that is forceful and lacking in subtlety. She is easily cowed by authority figures.

The time is the present. The action takes place in a warehouse full of furniture that is being used for a reality television program called "Executive Training." All the characters are aware that they are being viewed by a television audience. Mediocre and sophomoric by nature, all three characters shape their obviously contrived behavior to maintain the interest of their equally shallow audience and the indifferent, godlike CEO Dr. Heuchler. Edwin, Myna, and Iona are the type of individuals that would endure the humiliation and public voyeurism of the reality show format to attain recognition and money. They are not individuals that can be expected to advance through their initiative and intellect.

The performance length of this play is approximately one hour. Conceived as a theatre conference competition piece, the technical demands are minimal.

# THE MOOSE

## A PLAY IN ONE ACT

### Scene 1

*SETTING: The action takes place inside a warehouse filled with odd pieces of furniture, cardboard boxes, and wooden crates. There is an old landline telephone on an end table UC. An old fashion movable wooden chalkboard is located SL. All legs, travelers, and lighting batons are flown above the proscenium. The back wall of the stage should be visible. Offstage on SR there is a fake fire hose.*

*AT RISE: EDWIN and MYNA TESTERMAN, the final contestants of a television reality show called "Executive Training," are situated in a small living area that THEY have created CS under a bright light that is hanging below the proscenium. THEY are preparing to go home. The characters are always aware that THEY are on a television show.*

EDWIN. Myna, you know, we never did find out what this was for...

MYNA (*not looking up*). What's that, dear?

EDWIN. The air horn...

MYNA. Right, Edwin...

(*EDWIN plays with the air horn. MYNA is not concerned.*)

EDWIN. Ever wonder what kind of sound this baby makes? ... Maybe it doesn't even work.

*(EDWIN presses a button on the horn and an ear shattering blast issues from the horn. MYNA is startled to the point of falling into the chair.)*

Wow!! Isn't that something!

MYNA. Put it away, Edwin! ... And if you have any ideas about taking it home-

EDWIN. Don't be silly...

*(MYNA returns to HER original position. EDWIN continues to ponder the air horn.)*

Funny, it seems like everything they've given us had some purpose... But this? ... Hell, if I know?

MYNA (*not looking up*). Put it away, Edwin.

*(EDWIN returns the air horn to the table. HE picks up the FRED THE MOOSE puppet.)*

EDWIN. Finally, we'll be going home... Three months... I sure didn't expect this little retreat to last this long-

MYNA. Two weeks, you said.

EDWIN. Gee, just imagine what our lawn looks like!

*(MYNA looks up at HIM. SHE sees the puppet as EDWIN looks at it like a child looking at his prized toy. HE places the puppet's legs on HIS neck so that the puppet's head is on top of HIS head.)*

MYNA. No!

EDWIN. But, Myna?

MYNA. Forget it, Edwin!

EDWIN. But I've become attached to him! He's family!

MYNA. No, Edwin! I want to forget this whole bad experience as soon as possible.

*(EDWIN points to the puppet.)*

No!

*(EDWIN takes off the puppet and holds it in HIS arms.)*

EDWIN *(to the puppet)*. Sorry, ole buddy. You know how it goes, she's feeling a bit neglected. Three months without-

*(MYNA looks harshly at EDWIN. EDWIN is still looking at the puppet.)*

It's a little like the time when I had to put you in that box and we couldn't-

MYNA. Edwin!

EDWIN. Yes, you're right. I mustn't, well...

*(EDWIN places the puppet on the end of the sofa. HE continues to talk and pack HIS suitcase.)*

I hope Dr. Heuchler lets us see our evaluations. Maybe, they'll give us a diploma!

MYNA. My stomach burns.

*(EDWIN picks up the puppet again. HE sees MYNA isn't looking.)*

EDWIN. What you need is a nice hot meal. That's the thing!

*(EDWIN quickly places the puppet in HIS suitcase, and shuts the lid.)*

I know the perfect little restaurant-

*(Suddenly, the sound of a whistle blowing echoes through the cavernous warehouse. MISS BROYEUR enters from the darkness into the lit area. SHE has a wooden pointer and a box in HER arms. MYNA and EDWIN stand at attention.)*

BROYEUR. Look alive, you two! We're ready to begin the advance phase of the Executive Training Program!

*(MYNA's mouth drops open.)*

EDWIN, But Miss Broyeur, Dr. Heuchler said we'd be going home?!

BROYEUR. Bullshit!

MYNA. Yes, he did!

*(MISS BROYEUR blows HER whistle. EDWIN and MYNA stand together at attention. MISS BROYEUR paces in front of THEM.)*

BROYEUR. Well, Mr. Testerman, it took you long enough, didn't it?

*(EDWIN looks uneasy.)*

EDWIN *(looking away)*. Uh...

BROYEUR. You don't even know, do you? But, we knew you would do it. We can read you like a book. And why can we read you like a book, Mr. Testerman?

EDWIN. Because I am predictable, Miss Broyeur?

BROYEUR. And you, Ms. Testerman?

MYNA. Because I am... I am-

BROYEUR. I can't hear you!

MYNA. Because I'm predictable, too!



BROYEUR. So, you finally had to blow that horn, Mr. Testerman?  
Did anybody say you could blow that horn?

EDWIN. No, Miss Broyeur!

BROYEUR. Do you often make it a habit of doing things without  
approval of upper management?

EDWIN. Never!

BROYEUR. Too bad, Mr. Testerman. Now, we'll just have to see.  
Might take a couple more days, even a whole week.

MYNA. A week!

BROYEUR. Did I say you could speak, Ms. Testerman? Then don't!

*(MISS BROYEUR smiles. She pulls a small notepad from her  
pocket.)*

Remember, your company sent you here. Our graduates are some  
of the highest paid executives in the world! No one has ever been a  
disgrace to his or her company, or this program. THEY don't make  
off with company funds. NOT a single pen or paper-clip. THEY  
don't get sloppy falling-down drunk at cocktail parties and wake  
up in brothels. NOOO! THEY have control! ... And THEY learn it  
here!! It's like the Marines - *Semper Fidelis*! Yes! But those who  
don't make the mark-

*(SHE chuckles.)*

Dirty failures! Little folks with little dreams... The nine to five beer  
bellies with the slutty wives, and the prospect of getting their own  
office with a window is - Well, we know all about them, don't we?

EDWIN and MYNA. Yes, Miss Broyeur! Scum of the earth!!

BROYEUR. The box, Mr. Testerman!

*(EDWIN gets the box MISS BROYEUR brought in. HE holds it in HIS arms. MISS BROYEUR pulls out the Cupcake the Duck puppet.)*

This is for you, Ms. Testerman. I am proud to present Cupcake the Duck. Now, I EXPECT progress from you! YOU figure out just what to do with her. As for you Mr. Testerman, why don't you show your wife where YOUR puppet went?

*(EDWIN looks amazed.)*

Yes, we know all about it.

*(EDWIN covers HIS face.)*

Come on, Mr. Testerman, I haven't got all day. The suitcase, if you please?

*(EDWIN opens the suitcase.)*

For shame, for shame! Stealing company property is a disgrace to your daddy! We'll have to give him a call.

MYNA. Couldn't leave it alone, could you!

BROYEUR. No conflicts, Ms. Testerman!

MYNA. Yes, Miss Broyeur, no conflicts between us.

BROYEUR. Good, we'll have none of that.

*(MYNA nods.)*

You'll find blueprints for a new furniture arrangement in the box. All work must be completed by 6 A.M. each morning. Study your manual from 8 A.M. to 2 P.M.; recreation period must begin on the hour, never before. Dr. Heuchler will arrive at 4 P.M. sharp. He'll call before he comes. Answer the telephone ONLY on the seventh ring! Remember, ONLY Seven! You'll find this week's meals in the brown paper bags- Good day!

*(BROYEUR exits. MYNA looks at the puppet in HER hands, then EDWIN's puppet in the open suitcase.)*

MYNA. One more week?

EDWIN. Hush...

MYNA. You just had to blow that horn!

EDWIN. Can't you see it is all part of the plan? I was supposed to blow that horn. If not, we'd be kicked out of the program.

MYNA. What about that puppet?!

EDWIN. We'll not talk about that right now...

*(EDWIN starts removing the contents of the box. There are blueprints and bags.)*

MYNA. You just had to blow that horn! Another week, all because you had to-

*(EDWIN pulls a slip of paper from the box.)*

What are you doing?

EDWIN. Here we go! The air horn..."You have been provided with one Double-Blaster Supercharged Air Horn. This is part of the general alertness test and war games-

MYNA. War games?

EDWIN. Sure, Myna, listen to this. "We have assigned staff members to act as spies from a rival company. Be alert at all times, day and night! Should they elude your detection be forewarned that their objective is all your clean underwear!

MYNA. Our what?

EDWIN. That's what it says. Better double up, just in case.

*(EDWIN finds a bottle of gin in one of the paper bags.)*

Say, Myna, look at this! And my brand, too!

*(MYNA looks longingly at the bottle.)*

Another test!

*(EDWIN speaks as if he wants to be heard by somebody other than MYNA.)*

You won't catch me drinking that stuff!

*(HE hands the bottle to MYNA. MYNA starts to open the bottle.)*

No, sir, not me-

*(The phone rings. MYNA picks up the phone on the first ring.)*

Myna!

*(MYNA holds HER hand to HER mouth. EDWIN covers HIS face with HIS hand.)*

... Too late now. Just answer it...

*(MYNA speaks into the phone timidly.)*

MYNA. Hello? Yes, Miss Broyeur, only on the seventh ring... I understand... I mean... Edwin? Yes, he's right here... *(turning to EDWIN)* She wants to talk to you.

*(EDWIN takes the phone.)*

EDWIN. Sorry, Miss Broyeur... Right, only when spoken to... it's-

*(EDWIN looks at the clock on the table.)*

EDWIN (cont.). Three fifty-two... It is? ... Oh... Yes, Miss Broyeur, thank you! Yes, I will!

*(HE hangs up the phone and starts rushing about. HE takes the blueprints from the box and scans them as HE goes to the chalkboard.)*

MYNA. What did she say?

EDWIN. We must watch the clock, Myna. Dr. Heuchler has designated this as a work period.

*(HE mounts the blueprint on the chalkboard with masking tape, puts a tape measure on HIS belt, takes a stopwatch from the table and checks the clock. EDWIN then picks up the roll of masking tape from the table and goes behind the chair and places tape marks on the floor where the back legs are resting. HE motions for MYNA to get up from the chair.)*

Get up...

*(SHE carefully gets up while HE snaps HIS fingers impatiently. HE dumps over the chair and tapes an "X" - which is to mark the center of the four tape marks. HE pulls out a length of measuring tape from HIS tape measure. HE offers the end to MYNA to place on the "X.")*

Here, hold this on the "X".

*(SHE holds the tape measure as HE runs the tape to the center of the room. The phone rings again. MYNA lets go of HER end of the tape and it snaps back into its case, held by EDWIN. The end of the metal tape slaps the top of EDWIN's hand.)*

Damn!

MYNA. This could be it!

EDWIN *(counting rings)*. Three... Four...

*(The phone stops ringing.)*

EDWIN (cont.). Only four?

MYNA. Let's call him.

EDWIN. It's against the rules! Here, take the end of the tape. This has to be just right.

*(MYNA takes the end of the tape measure and places the end on the "X.")*

MYNA. Three months, Edwin!

EDWIN. I know. Could you hand me the masking tape?

*(SHE hands him the roll of tape.)*

MYNA. I can't stand this!

*(EDWIN places another tape "X" where he is. It is more to SL and about eight feet from the first "X.")*

EDWIN. Look on the bright side, Myna. Now, you have a puppet of your very own. We can have some real give and take during our playtime therapy periods.

MYNA. Oh, swell!

EDWIN. Come on, Myna, it's good for us. Helps relieve all those tensions.

MYNA. I'm getting tense!

EDWIN. No!

MYNA. Why not?

EDWIN. Look at the time, Myna.

MYNA. Ten of four... So? Just ten minutes before the last time.

EDWIN. Only on the hour, never before. Dr. Heuchler has designated this as a work period. It's best to obey his instructions to the letter. Recreation only on the hour, never before.

*(EDWIN takes a long strip of masking tape from the first "X" to the second "X.")*

MYNA. Right, Edwin; on the hour, never before-

EDWIN. Done! Now put the chair back on its marks.

*(MYNA frowns. SHE places the chair back where it was.)*

That's a girl. So when you get up from the chair next time remember to stand to the left of the line. Never to the right!

MYNA. Why?

EDWIN. Well, according to the floor plan-

*(He walks over to the blueprint.)*

If we stay within this area, the TV cameras will get the best picture. If you stay within this area you're safe. Walk over there and "You're out!" Remember the line, Myna. It's the *lifeline*. The Safety Line! Can you remember that?

MYNA. Yes, Edwin.

EDWIN. Are you sure?

MYNA. Yes, Edwin! Say, isn't our space getting smaller? ... Where are the cameras?

EDWIN. I don't know, they must be moving them while we are asleep. But I found the microphone! Guess where it is!

MYNA. Where?

EDWIN. Go ahead and guess.

MYNA. I don't know. I give up, Edwin.

EDWIN. You're not really trying, are you?

MYNA. Edwin!

(EDWIN *points to a lamp hanging from the rafters.*)

EDWIN (*whispering*). Right there. In the light fixture. Three months in this dump and you think we would have found it already.

MYNA (*shouting upward*). Yeah, three months! Three months of eating our meals out of paper bags! Three months of being shut up in this - THIS PLACE! - being studied like animals in a cage! Some executive retreat!

EDWIN. Shh! It's against the rules to engage in conflicts!

MYNA. They didn't even give us a TV!

EDWIN. We've got our puppets.

(MYNA *folds HER arms.*)

MYNA. Puppets?! Big deal! I thought we'd be playing golf and going to encounter sessions; meeting people at cocktail parties and being seen-

EDWIN. It said nothing about that in the brochure.

MYNA. What did it say about three months without sex?

EDWIN. You haven't been reading your manual. The book clearly states that there are many ways to deal with your sexual drives and control them. It builds character. And in case you've forgotten, the company brass gets to review the most eventful moments Heuchler's crew gets on tape.



MYNA (*drawing closer*). What about the bathroom? Come on, Edwin, let's make love in the tub!

(EDWIN *draws away*. HE *adjusts HIS tie*.)

EDWIN. There's a microphone in the toilet.

MYNA. You're getting paranoid!

EDWIN. I'm not going to get in an argument, Myna. It's against the rules to engage in conflict.

(EDWIN *starts HIS stopwatch*.)

When we get out of here we can go back to throwing dishes. Till then we'll play it safe.

(MYNA *grits her teeth*. EDWIN *exercises with dumbbells*.)

MYNA. Yes, Edwin.

EDWIN. Remember, we have to be slim and healthy. It's all part of looking the part.

(MYNA *holds back her rage*. EDWIN *puts down the dumbbells*.)

MYNA. Yes, Edwin!

(EDWIN *sprays air freshener in the room, and then stops HIS stopwatch*.)

EDWIN. Good...

(EDWIN *takes off HIS business jacket*.)

Now, we're set...

(EDWIN *and MYNA go to THEIR places*. EDWIN *on the sofa, and MYNA in the arm chair*. THEY *sit at the same time*.)

MYNA (*smiling*). Was that right this time?

EDWIN (*frowning*). Your right leg is on the wrong side of the line.

(MYNA *starts to move the chair.*)

EDWIN (excited). Don't move the chair!

MYNA. Why not?

EDWIN. If you move the chair the line has to move! The center of the chair is... is... Damnation!

(*Looking up at the hidden microphone. Then HE speaks calmly.*)

If you move the chair you set up a whole new array of variables to consider.

MYNA. Gee, I don't understand science.

EDWIN. It's very simple.

(EDWIN *writes an equation on the chalkboard.*)

Why?

(HE *draws a "Y", then an "="*)

Because Dr. Heuchler said so...He wants us to be safe.

(HE *writes "SAFETY FIRST" after the "="*)

Safety first... Got that?

MYNA. Yes. So, you want me to sit in half a chair?

EDWIN. Right.

MYNA. What about the sofa?

*(SHE moves seductively to the sofa.)*

EDWIN *(nervously)*. The sofa is off limits. You'll be safe in your chair-

MYNA. But what if I don't want to be safe? Hmm?

*(Sound of a door opening in the distance.)*

EDWIN. What was that?

MYNA. What?

EDWIN. Shh! Did you hear that?

*(HE carefully reaches for the air horn. EDWIN stalks over SL to SR. MYNA takes THEIR clean underwear from under the sofa cushions and holds them tightly in her arms.)*

MYNA. Is it them?

EDWIN. Shh!

*(EDWIN carefully walks back to the edge of SL with MYNA right behind HIM.)*

MYNA. Edwin! You're crossing the safety line!

*(SHE pulls HIM back before HE crosses the tape line.)*

EDWIN. I think they're out there.

MYNA. Oh God! They've started the war games.

*(EDWIN points the air horn to the ceiling. A pause. The alarm of the clock goes off. MYNA reaches for the clock as EDWIN activates the air horn. HE makes a long blast with the horn, then dives behind the sofa. A pause. HE looks up from behind, and shouts.)*

EDWIN. Damn!

*(MYNA holds HER ears in pain.)*

Damn, damn, damn!

*(EDWIN throws the air horn on the floor.)*

MYNA. You have to catch them in the act, Edwin...

*(EDWIN calls up to the ceiling.)*

EDWIN. Referee! I want a rematch! Well?

*(EDWIN shakes HIS fist in the direction of SR offstage.)*

Just wait till next time! That's right, spies from a rival company!  
Try again! I dare you. You'll never get my underwear!

*(MYNA puts the underwear back under the sofa cushions.)*

The clock!

MYNA. Yes, Edwin, the clock.

*(MYNA sits on the sofa. EDWIN dives behind the sofa. Noise comes from behind the sofa. A hand puppet rises from behind the sofa. EDWIN alters HIS voice to become FRED THE MOOSE. When EDWIN uses the voice of FRED it will be noted as FRED, and EDWIN when HE uses HIS normal voice.)*

FRED. Hello, I'm Fred the Moose! Everybody loves Fred the Moose!

MYNA. Hello, Fred.

FRED. What is funny about crying babies?

MYNA. What is it, Fred?

FRED. Hey, baby! You have no idea what is in store for you!

*(Singing the first line of "Life is Just a Bowl of Cherries," with swing)*

Hey, baby! What're you cryin' about? It does not get any better than this. Just wait... School, and more school, and more school... broken hearts and student loans, working four jobs, and eatin' noodles till you... well... But success is just around the corner, right?

*(Suddenly, he sings a few bars of "It Don't Mean a Thing.")*

Disposable worker, kiddo! Ha-ha-ha! Maybe, by the time you are fifty, you'll be a full-timer, darling... or not... then, you retire, and die. Happiness? Oh, you need cash for that, honey. You need-

DO-WHOP, DO-WHOP, DO-WHOP, YEAH!

*(There is a crash of a suspended cymbal from behind the sofa. FRED laughs. MYNA "acts" as if SHE is surprised.)*

Myna, Myna, my one true love, I have returned!

MYNA *(acting breathless)*. Oh my!

FRED *(drawing closer)*. Oh, Myna, Myna, fine as wine-a, uh....You could spin on a dime-a. Come on, baby, let's have a good time tonight! While Edwin's away, Fred will play! It's just the day for a wonderful, action-packed, adventure. So, get up and get out! Fred the Moose has told you so.

MYNA *(coy)*. What ever could you mean?

FRED. Just through that door, my dear, and you're free of it all. Just through that door - Nothing to fear! Nothing to fear but the fear of nothing itself-

*(Sound of a cymbal crash.)*

FRED (cont.) Tell Dr. Heuchler to go to hell. Tell him Fred the Moose has told you so.

*(MYNA takes HER puppet, and goes behind the sofa. FRED looks around as if wondering where SHE went. CUPCAKE THE DUCK appears on the top of the sofa back.)*

Well, what do we have here? What's your name darling?

CUPCAKE. Cupcake. Who's asking?

FRED. Fred the Moose, of course, of course! You mean, you've never heard of me?

CUPCAKE. Wait a minute... You don't look like a mouse to me.

FRED (to CUPCAKE). Ah, a fiery one! So pretty, too.

*(FRED gets close to CUPCAKE.)*

Want to work in my office? The boss is in my pocket.

CUPCAKE. What kind of work?

FRED. Easy work... The kind that requires an able body-

MYNA. Edwin!

*(FRED and CUPCAKE go down behind the sofa as MYNA comes up. EDWIN also stands up.)*

EDWIN. What?

MYNA. Fred's being nasty again! Did you hear what he said?

EDWIN. Fred is likely to say anything! You know that.

*(EDWIN brings FRED up from behind the sofa as if he had a will of his own. FRED speaks to EDWIN, but clearly the words are*

*coming from EDWIN's mouth. HE is not trying to "throw" HIS voice.)*

FRED. Fred's the name, and play is my game!

*(FRED to EDWIN)*

What's your name, peewee?

EDWIN. Peewee? Where did that come from?

FRED. Edwin is a peewee, isn't he? Don't you think so, Milly-Molly-Myna?

MYNA. Never mind!

*(EDWIN goes down behind the sofa. FRED remains, and converses with MYNA.)*

FRED. Really, sweetheart! You need to size up the situation. No cookies, like mommy said, until you finish peas – peewee peas, yeah.

*(A cymbal crash from behind the sofa.)*

Now, let's not start out on the wrong foot - foot? Foot!

*(FRED sings a little song. The song is obviously ad lib.)*

A FOOT IS A FOOT IN THE SWEETEST OF WAYS.  
A MILE IS A MILE ON THE SUNNIEST OF DAYS  
LA-LA, LA-LA, LA-LA

*(FRED comes closer to MYNA.)*

Come here, Myna... My Milly-Molly-Myna.

*(FRED sings.)*

LA, LA-LA, LA-LA!

FRED (cont.) I want to look into your eyes.

*(SHE sits on the sofa.)*

Oh yes! Such arms you have - strong and sturdy! In shape, huh?

MYNA. Well, I work out-

FRED. Sure you do! By the size of things, I'd say your mother must have been of beef stock, ha-ha!

MYNA. Hey!

FRED. Say, Myna, a quart jar says your momma spent the night on her back in the barn.

MYNA. You're getting mean again-

FRED. She sure does like her liquor. I can see her. Hay all stuck to her back, and in that wild, ragged head... staggering to the house...

*(A cymbal crash from behind the sofa.)*

For those of you who just tuned in, it's the Fred the Moose Show! Friends, everybody: Fun time, fun time, yes, indeed! Say it, baby!

*(FRED faces MYNA.)*

Now, kiss me. Put a shine on my antlers, if you know what I mean?

*(MYNA grabs one of FRED's antlers.)*

MYNA. I told you not to talk about my mother!

*(EDWIN stands up from behind the sofa. HE speaks as if HE has just walked in the room.)*

EDWIN. Hey! What's going on here?



MYNA. Oh, Edwin, thank goodness you're here! This dirty moose is giving me a hard time.

EDWIN. Oh, is he? We've got a place for troublemakers here. It's called "The Black Box."

*(EDWIN makes the puppet start to shake as if fearful.)*

You've heard of it?

*(The puppet nods.)*

Good. I knew you'd understand. So, Myna, is there anything else I can do for you?

MYNA. No thank you, Edwin. I think I can handle it from here.

EDWIN. Carry on, then...

*(EDWIN goes down behind the sofa.)*

FRED. All in all, I know you really like me better. Poor Edwin is just not your type. Here you are shut up in this prison with Mr. Paranoid. Waiting for some silly phone call. And for what? So some high and mighty expert can tell you what you already know.

MYNA. What's that, Fred?

FRED. You mean you don't know? Ask Cupcake, maybe she'll enlighten you, if you know what I mean, what say? Ha-ha!

MYNA. Oh, Cupcake dear. I hope you haven't gone to bed?

*(SHE puts CUPCAKE on HER arm.)*

CUPCAKE. Here I am!

MYNA. What do you think of my hair? *Tres chic*, huh?

FRED. It's a knockout! It draws attention away from your face... Brings out all those nice curves. You must show Edwin.

*(FRED comes closer to MYNA.)*

FRED. He'll promote you later.

MYNA. So that's the way you think it goes? A woman gets her promotions in the bedroom? You sexist pig!

FRED. Not at all, kiddo. It's not rocket science, it's just business. You can make mistakes, so long as you're cute – same for the boys. Call it, customer satisfaction...

MYNA. You're slime!

CUPCAKE. I think he's right.

MYNA. Hey, I thought you were on my side?

CUPCAKE. I am... If you want to make it in this world, you have to jump through somebody's hoop. You're lucky, if you come out of it with anything at all.

MYNA. Right or wrong, Fred is slime, just the same.

*(MYNA sticks her tongue at FRED.)*

FRED. Sure, I don't claim to be anything else. It gives me no problems...

*(MYNA removes the puppet.)*

I know how it is MYNA. What with Edwin being so distant...

*(EDWIN brings FRED the puppet to her shoulder.)*

MYNA. I don't know what you mean.

FRED. You don't? Well, isn't it obvious? ... The man has become too involved with the experience, hasn't he? He's their slave; their Toady-Toad-Toady. He's afraid. Afraid to fail. He always is.

(EDWIN *caresses HER neck with the FRED puppet.*)

MYNA. Stop... Well - Well, he... He's trying... It's for both of us... Fred!

FRED. You're mine! I knew it all along!

(FRED *lunges into MYNA's blouse. MYNA screams.*)

MYNA. You bastard!

(MYNA *grabs FRED by the antlers.*)

Can't trust you for a moment, Fred! Always, making a move-

(MYNA *pulls the puppet off EDWIN's arm.*)

Edwin! Edwin, throw this garbage out!

(SHE *hands HIM the limp puppet.*)

EDWIN. Fred the Moose is up to his old tricks; for shame, for shame. Into the Black Box with you.

MYNA. Yes, lover, into the Black Box goes Fred the Moose!

(EDWIN *takes the limp puppet, and shakes it.*)

Punish Fred! He deserves it.

EDWIN. Perhaps, but at least he took his chances.

MYNA. Throw him in!

(EDWIN *takes a small black box from under the table and puts the puppet in the box.*)

EDWIN (*to the microphone in the light*). There! Now I am pleased... I enjoy being the arm of justice; for his kind, there is nothing more inviting. After all, I went to school, I am an executive! His kind hangs around in bars trying to pick up loose women! So what if belongs to the union?

(EDWIN and MYNA stand on a box under the light fixture.)

MYNA (feigned). Your delight in punishing Fred pleases me. It gives you youth - arrogance! Pride in your own power over nature, and middle management-

(MYNA starts to unbutton EDWIN's vest. EDWIN re-buttons it.)

Edwin... Do you think... I mean, do you think we'll have orgasms again?

(*The phone rings. EDWIN and MYNA jump. They return to a panic ridden state.*)

EDWIN. Wait for the seventh ring!

MYNA. I know! Do you take me for an idiot?

EDWIN. Shh... Five... No, this is five-

MYNA. It's six!

EDWIN. I've lost count... My God...

MYNA. Just answer it!

EDWIN. I can't... I mean - Yes!

(*As EDWIN reaches for the phone it stops ringing.*)

... It stopped? Was it seven? MYNA, was it seven?

(MYNA looks at EDWIN with disgust.)

MYNA. It was nine...

EDWIN. Oh God.

*(EDWIN slowly returns to the sofa.)*

We'll never know, will we? That could have been Him, and we missed it.

MYNA. Edwin, you're such a Toady-Toad-Toady!

*(EDWIN looks at MYNA. HE points to the light fixture.)*

EDWIN. Myna! This is Edwin you're talking to, not Fred the Moose.

MYNA. At least Fred doesn't cry over missed phone calls. What REAL man would?

EDWIN. You shouldn't talk to me like that, dear. Save it for Fred. He loves conflict dynamics. He can return your investment many times over.

*(EDWIN stands under the light fixture and speaks upward.)*

I on the other hand, will be unable to participate in such activities-

*(MYNA has an evil smile on HER face. SHE walks over the tape line.)*

Myna!

MYNA. Crossed the safety line, didn't I.

EDWIN. You're no longer safe!

MYNA. That's right Edwin. Ready to take the risk? Come over here with me.

*(MYNA takes off her blouse.)*

EDWIN. It is forbidden! Dr. Heuchler could be here any minute - Think of the consequences!

*(HE belches.)*

Something going amiss ruins my digestion. Dr. Heuchler wants me to relax. Too much stress is a killer! I should be doing a little paddle-ball. You really ought to try paddle-ball. It's quite relaxing - Say, have you seen my paddle ball?

MYNA *(sarcastic)*. Lost it again, dear?

EDWIN. What do you think...dear?!

*(EDWIN starts looking around the room. MYNA puts her blouse on again.)*

MYNA. Well, I'll tell you where it's not. Not in here, and it's going to stay that way, too! Drives me nuts!

EDWIN. Damn it, woman, where's my paddle-ball?!

*(HE holds his stomach.)*

MYNA. Find it, Edwin! Use the scientific method.

*(SHE points to the blueprint taped to the blackboard. EDWIN rushes about looking for the toy. HE belches again. HE grabs a paper bag and ducks behind the sofa. MYNA mounts the CS table and speaks up to the light fixture that might hide the microphone. EDWIN gags.)*

I don't care what you think, Dr. Heuchler! I don't want to play with puppets, or eat my meals out of paper sacks, or sit in half a chair! I want to have my life back!

*(EDWIN makes the sounds of gagging again.)*

I'm a free, law abiding citizen - Nobody tells me what to be, or where to live, or what to eat! How dare you make choices for me! How dare you turn marriage into a... a-

*(MYNA is frustrated and angry.)*

Just who do you think you are anyway? God?!

*(There is the sound of a whistle being blown. EDWIN pops up from behind the sofa. MYNA jumps off the table and starts to tuck in HER blouse.)*

EDWIN. Oh, my God!

*(MISS BROYEUR enters blowing HER whistle. SHE has a box full of rolls of tape, blueprints, and a bathroom scale.)*

BROYEUR. Weight check, weight check! -

*(SHE looks at MYNA and EDWIN, then at the CS table.)*

My-my, what do we have here? Somebody can't follow a simple blueprint, can they? ... Well, Mr. Testerman?

*(EDWIN moves the table back to its rightful place.)*

BROYEUR. Very good. Now, I have a little surprise for you. It's really quite special... You do like special things, Mr. Testerman? Don't you?

EDWIN. Yes... Yes, Miss Broyeur.

BROYEUR. Good...

*(SHE shoves the box into EDWIN's arms suddenly.)*

Take this!

*(SHE blows the whistle.)*

Weight check!

*(SHE takes the bathroom scale out of the box, and then places it on the floor.)*

Ms. Testerman, on the scale.

*(MYNA steps onto the scale. BROYEUR takes out a notepad and records MYNA's weight.)*

Oh... Two pounds. You may step down. Your turn, Mr. Testerman.

*(EDWIN steps onto the scale with the box still in HIS hands. MISS BROYEUR frowns.)*

Without the box, Mr. Testerman.

*(EDWIN hands the box to MYNA.)*

Very good! You've lost a full seven pounds!

*(MISS BROYEUR returns the note pad to HER coat pocket and removes an envelope from the same.)*

Your paycheck for this week. There is a two percent arbitrary raise for Mr. Testerman, and a ten percent raise to Ms. Testerman for damaging furniture. I'm sure you understand. You'll find the next two week's supply of rations in the box-

EDWIN. Two weeks?

MYNA. Where is Dr. Heuchler?

BROYEUR. Did I say you could speak?

MYNA. No, ma'am... But he promised to come today.

*(A pause. MISS BROYEUR snarls.)*



BROYEUR. Dr. Heuchler is a very busy man. He will get to your case when he gets a chance. Good day!

(MISS BROYEUR *starts to exit.*)

And another thing, Ms. Testerman. I am beginning to develop a certain dislike for you. It is becoming quite obvious you will be earning my "Stupid Prize" for the year. You may ask why?

MYNA. Uh... Why?

BROYEUR. Have you been eating cake?

MYNA. Yes... But only the portion in my lunch bag.

BROYEUR. Do you make it a habit of eating everything that is offered to you... Or maybe you're just a pig?

(MYNA *looks at EDWIN. SHE is upset.*)

MYNA. But it was in the bag, Miss Broyeur!

BROYEUR. Enough! Failure to lose the prescribed amount of weight during an assigned period means six units... Please bend over...

(MISS BROYEUR *takes a wooden rod from HER pocket.*)

MYNA. Edwin... Why don't you say something?

BROYEUR. Now isn't that sweet, her husband wants a "Stupid Prize", too...

(MISS BROYEUR *flexes the wooden rod in HER hands.*)

Please bend over, Ms. Testerman.

(MYNA *bends over. MISS BROYEUR strikes HER on the rear end with the rod. MYNA whimpers.*)

Think of cake now, Ms. Testerman.

(MISS BROYEUR *strikes her again.*)

Tell me... Who in this room can eat cake?

MYNA. Edwin-

BROYEUR. Wrong!

(MISS BROYEUR *strikes HER again.*)

Perhaps a clue? Quack, quack...

MYNA. Cupcake the Duck?

BROYEUR. Right!

(MISS BROYEUR *strikes HER four more times.*)

Cupcake the Duck and Fred the Moose! They are the vessels of false appetites. They can eat cake!

(MYNA *stands upright. SHE rubs her rear end.*)

MYNA. Yes, ma'am, Miss Broyeur.

BROYEUR. And what else?

MYNA. They can smoke, drink, say nasty words, fight each other... and have spontaneous sexual activity... particularly, when they could be attending to work.

EDWIN. Miss Broyeur, can I ask a question?

BROYEUR. Yes, Mr. Testerman.

EDWIN. This thing about... you know, no sexual contact; I mean, isn't that going a little far. We're married.

BROYEUR. It is forbidden! Remember where you are: this is Executive Training Camp! We want you to turn out the way your daddy wanted you to be! We want you to be strong enough to resist! Remember what you are! You are the chosen people - Executive men and women. Strong, handsome, lean and mean; you're a team! The company is your life. You cannot be ensnared by the rumbling of your bowels; or be led about by your testicles; or be the special slave of any passions. And what do you get for acting properly: Power! Money! Respect! What do you get Mr. Testerman?

EDWIN. I get power, money, and respect, Miss Broyeur!

BROYEUR. Very good! So the next time you get one of those biological urges remember Cupcake the Duck and Fred the Moose. That is what they're here for: Personal Management through Dramatic Therapy. We paid a consulting firm \$300,000 to develop the technique. Good day!

(MISS BROYEUR *exits*. EDWIN *takes off his jacket*.)

EDWIN. Personal Management through Dramatic Therapy. We must be out of our minds.

(MYNA *glares at EDWIN*.)

What is it now?

MYNA. You just stood by and let *that woman* beat me.

EDWIN. Tell it to Cupcake the Duck.

(EDWIN *sits on the sofa*.)

You know, sometimes I feel everything in us that is honest is being drawn out.

(MYNA *picks up the Cupcake the Duck puppet*.)

(MYNA places the puppet on HER hand and looks at it. Then she starts to strangle the puppet with HER other hand. The puppet appears to struggle.)

EDWIN (cont.) We move furniture about for no reason and let a couple of puppets do our living for us. The people at the top didn't get there by being spineless blobs. We know they're just a cut above gangsters. So, why do we have to be so damn moral and pure, huh? Is the corporation one of those religious cults? You know, like-

(EDWIN *looks over HIS shoulder at MYNA.*)

What are you doing?

MYNA. Murdering Cupcake! Die Cupcake!

(MYNA *allows the puppet hand to go limp.*)

There!

(MYNA *drops cupcake. SHE comes over to EDWIN.*)

That's it, Edwin. Take care of your own, and to hell with the rest. Use them, like they use you. It's war! Anybody who doesn't help you in your climb to the top is an enemy, and they must be dealt with in the same fashion as those who work against you. Why can't you see that?

(EDWIN *sees a paddle-ball game in the box MISS BROYEUR came in with. HE races across the room to the box pushing MYNA aside as HE goes.*)

EDWIN. My paddle-ball!

(EDWIN *picks up the paddle-ball and starts playing with it.*)

MYNA. What right does she have - How dare she? Beating me like a dog. I could take her on any day.

EDWIN. That's not nice, Myna. It's physical violence-

MYNA. What do you call what she was doing to me?

EDWIN. Hmm... Physical violence, but for educational purposes... When she's off work she might be a real sweetheart. Who knows? Besides, you didn't have to bend over for her. If you had read the manual - Tell me, do you ever read anything all the way through?

MYNA. What did you say?!

EDWIN. I was saying, the manual states in chapter 11: "To accept punishment is to admit defeat. Defeat is the ultimate punishment." You know, if I humiliated and starved you; I would be arrested for abuse. Anybody in upper management can do the same - indirectly; and as long as they get the blessing from accounting, it's worth a bonus. Remember when they shut down that big plant, and outsourced the jobs overseas. Boy, company shares climbed... Big-ass bonuses!

*(MYNA looks back at EDWIN. SHE snatches the ball of HIS paddle-ball game and breaks the rubber band.)*

MYNA. You fool! You read all the words and recite them by heart; yet, you've missed it all. We're being punished! Let's take what we learned, and then, set up shop on their turf – competition to the death!

*(The phone rings. EDWIN rushes to the phone.)*

No! Let it ring. Let it ring all day long.

EDWIN. You must be joking. It's not safe.

*(MYNA grabs EDWIN's face.)*

MYNA. You know why this has been going on for three months, Mr. By-The-Book?! We've been doing everything they've said. Now how can you call yourself a leader when you do everything you're told?

EDWIN. I need to answer the phone!

MYNA. Don't touch that phone!

*(EDWIN reaches for the phone. MYNA lunges forward at HIM. EDWIN not being prepared for this falls backward with MYNA landing on top of HIM. EDWIN reaches upward to the phone.)*

Forget about the goddamned phone!!

*(SHE kisses HIM as SHE holds HIM down.)*

What would Fred do? What would the *real* Edwin do?

*(EDWIN laughs evilly and kisses HER. The phone rings on.)*

*(Blackout. End of Scene 1)*

## Scene 2

*SETTING: It is the next day. The action takes place in the same location.*

*AT RISE: Lights come up suddenly when EDWIN makes a loud animal noise. EDWIN and MYNA are inside a large cardboard box SR. EDWIN and MYNA crawl out of the box. EDWIN has the air horn and MYNA has the bottle of gin. EDWIN raises the air horn up in his right hand. MYNA drinks from the bottle of gin with her left. EDWIN and MYNA are tipsy. THIER clothes are in a disorderly state. The phone starts to ring. THEY stop singing for a second, look at each other, then continue singing. The phone continues to ring and ring. THEY finish singing and each takes a drink from the bottle. EDWIN looks at the phone, then looks at the air horn.*

EDWIN. Shall I, my love...

MYNA. Oh, Edwin, do. Please do...

*(EDWIN picks up the receiver of the phone, places the air horn near the mouthpiece. MYNA puts HER hands over HER ears. EDWIN issues a long blast from the air horn into the phone. EDWIN speaks into the phone.)*

EDWIN. We love you, Dr. Heuchler. We really do.

*(HE slams the phone back down on its hook. MYNA laughs.)*

MYNA. I'm so proud of you, Edwin!

*(SHE kisses his cheek. MISS BROYEUR bursts in through the door. SHE has HER wooden rod in hand.)*

BROYEUR. Just what do you two think you're doing!

(MYNA *thumbs* HER *nose* and *makes a rude noise* at MISS BROYEUR. MISS BROYEUR *gasps* at the sight of the bottle of gin.)

Alcohol! You have alcohol!

(EDWIN *offers* MISS BROYEUR *the bottle*.)

EDWIN. Won't you join us, Broyeur? We're having such a lovely time.

BROYEUR. You pigs!

(MISS BROYEUR *knocks the bottle from* HIS *hand*.)

EDWIN. Pigs?

(EDWIN *blows the air horn in* HER *face*.)

Yes, Miss Broyeur, we've cast down the old gods from their pedestals.

(MISS BROYEUR *raises* HER *wooden rod to strike* EDWIN. MYNA *grabs* MISS BROYEUR's *wrist*. MYNA *is much stronger than* MISS BROYEUR.)

Let's get down and party!

MYNA. Come now, Miss Broyeur, you wouldn't hit my husband? He's a visionary now.

(SHE *forces the rod from* BROYEUR's *hand*.)

BROYEUR. You can't do this! It's... it's mutiny!!

(EDWIN *and* MYNA *laugh*.)



BROYEUR (cont.). That's right, Mutiny, Nonconformity... wait till your company -Those good people who had faith in you! - Just wait till they hear about this!! See! Now they'll know what you really are: nonconformists and filth mongers!

(MYNA *throws* MISS BROYEUR *over the arm of the sofa.*)

EDWIN. Very good, Myna, it's those strong arms of yours. Just what the doctor ordered. You see, Miss Broyeur, you should never mess with a farm girl.

MYNA. See for yourself.

(MYNA *strikes* MISS BROYEUR *on the rear end with the rod.*)

My-

(MYNA *strikes again.*)

Mother-

(MYNA *strikes again.*)

Told me

(MYNA *strikes two times.*)

To pick the

(MYNA *strikes with each of the three following words.*)

Very best one! You're it, darling!

(MYNA *strikes for the last time.*)

As you can see, it smarts. Keep it in mind.

(MISS BROYEUR *holds back* HER *anger.*)

BROYEUR. Laugh! Laugh all you want! Wait till Dr. Heuchler sees what you've done to me-

EDWIN. Temper, temper... we'll have none of that.

(MISS BROYEUR *looks at the TESTERMANS with contempt. SHE then covers HER face in shame. EDWIN sits on the arm of the chair.*)

BROYEUR. I was up for promotion... Now, you two! You had to step out of line!

(BROYEUR *bites EDWIN's leg, then stands up.*)

Why are you doing this to me?!

(*The TESTERMANS look surprised.*)

I could have been somebody if it weren't for you!

EDWIN. You're kidding...

(MISS BROYEUR *looks up at them.*)

BROYEUR. Why did you have to do this? I'm so ashamed-

(MISS BROYEUR *puts HER face in HER hands and starts to cry. EDWIN takes MYNA aside.*)

EDWIN. This is the very thing some of the idiots of the "Old School" used to write white papers about: "Career Crisis"... maybe, "Middle Management Burnout."

MYNA. Really?

EDWIN. Yes, indeed! They start forgetting to cross the "T's" and dot the "I's," if you know what I mean...

MYNA. Ooooo, that's right! And to think of the repressed emotions, and so on...

*(MISS BROYEUR finds a piece of pipe insulation under the table while SHE is on the floor and starts sneaking up on the TESTERMANS.)*

EDWIN. Only in certain cases, but overall that's just as bad as never crossing "T's" or dotting "I's." Who knows, a poor education might be the cause of writing errors instead of dysfunctional behavior?

*(MISS BROYEUR raises the pipe insulation to hit EDWIN.)*

MYNA. Productivity is all that counts – Look out!

*(EDWIN and MYNA jump back. MISS BROYEUR misses. SHE chases them around the room, and over the furniture.)*

BROYEUR. Stand still! This is a matter of principles!

*(SHE tries to hit THEM, but THEY manage to wrestle HER to the ground.)*

Let me go! It's a matter of principles! I can't fail now!

*(EDWIN takes the pipe insulation from HER.)*

EDWIN. Listen to me, Miss Broyeur! We're in control now. We don't want anything violent. We're educating ourselves.

MYNA. We're studying for "Upper Management!"

*(The phone rings. Sudden quiet.)*

BROYEUR. It's him!

EDWIN. Answer it.

BROYEUR. Me? What do I say? No! Not on your life!

*(The TESTERMANS drag HER kicking and screaming over to the phone.)*

You can't make me!!

*(EDWIN picks up the phone and places the receiver to her ear.)*

No! I won't-

*(A sudden change of tone.)*

Hello? ... Dr. Heuchler... We have a little...

*(SHE speaks loudly.)*

I said, we have a little problem! Yes, it is very serious... They've become nonconformists... What? ... You want me to what? ... But... But I, no... Hello...

*(With astonishment)*

He hung up... He hung up on me! Oh, God, it's all over now. No promotion... It's all over... I could cry.

EDWIN. What did he say?

BROYEUR. He said it was all my fault...

*(SHE starts to break down and cry.)*

He said I never do anything right. He said I was a disgrace to the company and my daddy-

*(MYNA puts HER arms around MISS BROYEUR.)*

MYNA. Poor dear-

*(MISS BROYEUR pushes HER away.)*

BROYEUR. Don't touch me!

*(MISS BROYEUR rolls up in a fetal position.)*

EDWIN. Miss Broyeur, it's really not that bad.

BROYEUR. Yes, it is!

MYNA. See, it's really rather simple. All we want is Dr. Heuchler to come here. We just want to talk to him face to face. That's all.

EDWIN. He never comes when he says he will. Just you.

BROYEUR. He's a very busy man.

EDWIN. You mean a "Hostile Takeover" isn't a noteworthy event for "The Good Doctor?"

BROYEUR. So, what if he comes? Will you beat him, too?

MYNA. What makes you think we're violent people? All we want to do is talk to the man. Get a few answers to some simple questions... and then we'll go right back to work.

BROYEUR. Really?

EDWIN. Sure! Back to rearranging furniture and eating out of paper bags.

MYNA. And taking pills that upset our stomachs so we can lose weight.

EDWIN. And no more making love.

(MYNA *looks at* EDWIN *with concern*.)

BROYEUR. Will you do that, Mr. Testerman? For me?

EDWIN. Sure we will! Strike over!

MYNA. Let us call a truce, Miss Broyeur. We'll work with you, if you work with us. Well, what do you say?

BROYEUR. You'll do that for me, Mr. and Ms. Testerman?

MYNA. We're all friends here; just call us Myna and Edwin.

EDWIN. And what do we call you?

*(A pause. MISS BROYEUR becomes a bit timid.)*

BROYEUR. Iona...

MYNA. Iona? Iona Broyeur... I own a Broyeur? French for... what?

*(MYNA starts to chuckle. SHE quickly holds it back.)*

BROYEUR. I knew it!

EDWIN. No offense, Miss Broyeur - I mean, Iona... It's just-

BROYEUR. My Daddy liked Iona. After his mother. Daddy thought a lot of his mother.

EDWIN. I'm sure!

BROYEUR. Maybe, I should be going now. You are such nice folks!

MYNA. And you'll tell Dr. Heuchler about our little request?

BROYEUR. I'll bring him right over. You can count on me!

*(MISS BROYEUR straightens HERSELF as SHE walks to the door.)*

EDWIN. Just think about that promotion!

BROYEUR. Yes! I will, for Daddy!

*(MISS BROYEUR exits. EDWIN and MYNA pause and look at each other. Then they explode in laughter.)*

EDWIN and MYNA. Iona Broyeur!

EDWIN. Everybody ought to own a *broyeur*! Well, I guess it is back to business as usual.

*(EDWIN gets HIS Fred the Moose puppet, and HIS pants. HE puts the puppet on the sofa and puts on HIS pants. EDWIN moves rapidly, MYNA starts to dress slowly.)*

Yes, Myna... back to work.

*(EDWIN goes through the box of lunch bags and blueprints.)*

Yes, Dr. Heuchler has designated this as a work period. Did you have lunch yet?

*(HE throws the bag to MYNA without looking. SHE picks it up off the floor. EDWIN finds the right blueprints.)*

This is it! Want to give me a hand with the sofa?

*(SHE helps move the sofa.)*

And the chair goes like this... And the table here-

*(MYNA sits down as EDWIN races about. SHE is eating pound cake. EDWIN offers the bottle to MYNA.)*

EDWIN. Just a little sip left for the both of us.

*(MYNA looks at the FRED puppet, and points.)*

MYNA. No more?

*(The alarm clock rings. EDWIN stops the alarm and goes behind the sofa. MYNA sits in the chair. The Fred the Moose puppet pops up from behind the sofa.)*

FRED. Boys and girls, one and all, it's the Fred the Moose Show!!

*(Sings - like a school fight song)*

(singing)

FRED THE MOOSE IS LOOSE!  
FRED THE MOOSE IS LOOSE!  
HIDE THE VIRGINS, HIDE THE VIRGINS,  
LOCK UP ALL YOUR BOOZE!

FRED THE MOOSE IS GAME!  
HE TREATS THEM ALL THE SAME:  
IT'S IN AND OUT, AND IN AND OUT!  
JUST HEAR THEM SHOUT-  
MORE! MORE! MOOSE!!

THE MOOSE IS NOT A FOOL.  
HE LEARNED IT ALL IN SCHOOL!  
ONE, TWO, THREE, FOUR,  
HELLO BABE, WHAT'S YOUR SIGN!  
FIVE, SIX, SEVEN, EIGHT,  
TAKE A LOOK AT HER BEHIND!

*(Speaking as an announcer.)*

And it's time for Fred the Moose! It's the Fred the Moose Show!

*(MYNA stands up and throws a piece of pound cake at FRED.)*

MYNA. Shut up!

FRED. What's the matter, love? Tell Fred. Fred is your friend.

MYNA. Edwin!

*(EDWIN comes up from behind the chair.)*

EDWIN. What's wrong now?

MYNA. So what if Dr. Heuchler comes? Where do we go from there?

EDWIN. I don't know - What makes you think I know anything?



(EDWIN *returns to singing in the Fred the Moose voice.*)

FRED THE MOOSE IS LOOSE! FRED THE MOOSE IS LOOSE!  
HIDE THE VIRGINS, HIDE THE-

MYNA. Damn it, Fred! This is serious!

FRED. If you don't like what I have to say, just leave I say. For Fred the Moose has told you once before:

A nickel, a dime is right this time;  
A foot is a mile when you're on the lam;  
A credit card becometh thee, O Sam;  
For in Houston, a man is a man.  
Of course, of course!

MYNA. Fred is nasty!

FRED. It is not!

MYNA. Of course, of course!

FRED. Oh Yeah! ... Hey, where's my cymbal?

EDWIN. Sorry.

(EDWIN *beats the cymbal behind the sofa.*)

FRED. Edwin's not too bright, but he works for peanuts. Hey, Myna, my Milly, Molly, Myna, why don't you take off your clothes? I've been dying to know where you're putting away all that cake! Beef stock, beef stock, she's got cake in her-

MYNA. Oh, yeah?!

(MYNA *looks around for the Cupcake the Duck puppet.*)

Where's Cupcake, Edwin?!

EDWIN. You killed her!

MYNA. Here she is...

*(MYNA puts on the puppet.)*

CUPCAKE. Fred is a nasty boy! Nasty, nasty!!

FRED. Temper, temper, my little Cupcake-

*(FRED laughs)*

Oh, but I am cultured, can't you see? I can recite poetry.

I HAD A LITTLE BIRD  
HER NAME WAS ENZA  
I OPENED THE WINDOW  
AND INFLUENZA!

CUPCAKE. That's not poetry!

FRED. But isn't it sweet? It rhymes, too!

CUPCAKE. Fred can talk, but what can he do? Edwin can try... well, we know about Edwin. Who is top dog around here?

FRED. I taught him everything he knows! Fred is all men; Fred is forever. Let's try that culture thing again, baby!

*(Playing the Shakespearean actor)*

When my lord knocks up my lady,  
Fred is there, of course, of course.  
And when my lady screams and shouts,  
My lord thanks Fred, for sure, for sure.  
Trade not your kingdom for a horse,  
Call forth the moose, and let him out!

*(Rapping)*

Hey, nonny-noony,  
Skiddly-do, be-bob,  
Da-da, ba-bop-bop,  
Roger-Wilco, nonny,  
Mama! Ha! Oh, yeah-

*(MISS BROYEUR bursts into the warehouse. SHE has a green water pistol in her hand.)*

BROYEUR. Hands up, you pigs!

*(EDWIN and MYNA jump up and hold up their hands with the puppets still on them.)*

FRED. We've been raided!

CUPCAKE. What will daddy think of me?

BROYEUR. Silence! Now I'm in command and there will be order! You will act like proper people and do as you're told. Is that understood?

MYNA. But Iona-

BROYEUR. Miss Broyeur is my name! Use it!

FRED. Is Dr. Heuchler coming?

BROYEUR. Dr. Heuchler is a very busy man. Too busy for the likes of you. I must make you like Daddy wanted at all costs, by force if necessary!

EDWIN. You betrayed us!

BROYEUR. Nonsense! You betrayed yourselves. Now, go to it! Move that furniture!

MYNA. But we just moved it? ... According to the last plan...

BROYEUR. Why? This can't be... Why did you do this?

EDWIN. It's our job.

BROYEUR. What do you mean; you just wanted to do your job... Nobody in their right mind does what they have to do, just on a whim... There has to be coercion. Absolutely! If somebody is working for pleasure, you have to put a stop to it... I'm too late. Freedom made them mad.

FRED. C'mon, Broyeur, let's kiss and make up.

MYNA. Did you hear that, Edwin! There he goes again!

EDWIN. Just an expression, dear.

BROYEUR. Shut up, or the both of you are on report!

FRED. I think Iona has an attitude problem.

BROYEUR (*mockingly*). I think Iona has an attitude problem.

(*In a normal voice*)

Want to see how bad it gets, Mr. Testerman? Now, take off that silly thing. Take it off!

EDWIN. He's like that, Miss Broyeur, trying to provoke you.

MYNA. It's sadistic, that's what it is!

EDWIN. It's so humiliating! I just want to go to my room and never come out.

BROYEUR. Take off that puppet, Mr. Testerman...

(*SHE points the water pistol at HIM.*)

Now!

*(EDWIN takes off the puppet, but continues to talk in FRED's voice.)*

EDWIN *(in FRED voice)*. Hey, Broyeur darling, got a job for you. You want to work in the office with me. Doing natural work? More or less. Something like that?

*(BROYEUR points the gun at the puppet, then EDWIN. EDWIN returns to HIS own voice.)*

Sorry, Miss Broyeur, he has a way of sticking

BROYEUR. What in God's name is going on here?! Furniture moved, and that THING... get the scale!

*(MYNA looks around for the scale.)*

Hop to it, pig! Bet you've been eating, haven't you? Gaining weight and such...

*(MYNA brings out the scale and puts it on the floor.)*

You first!

*(MYNA steps on the scale. MISS BROYEUR gasps.)*

This can't be?! You can't be losing weight! Two ounces since yesterday! You fixed it, didn't you?

MYNA. No, I didn't!

BROYEUR. Don't lie to me, bitch!

MYNA. Really, I didn't. This is my true weight!

BROYEUR. Liar!

*(MISS BROYEUR picks up the scale to adjust it. SHE leaves the water pistol on the floor. SHE adjusts the scale.)*

There! ... Now, try it...

*(SHE looks at the pistol on the floor. A pause.)*

Oh, shit!

*(THEY all scramble for possession of the gun. EDWIN gets the gun.)*

EDWIN. I've got it, I've got it!!

*(MISS BROYEUR folds HER arms and turns away.)*

BROYEUR. No water.

*(EDWIN looks at HER.)*

EDWIN. What do you mean, no water?

BROYEUR. That's what I said.

*(EDWIN looks at the gun, and pumps the trigger.)*

EDWIN. No water.

BROYEUR. I'm not a violent person.

*(EDWIN throws the pistol on the sofa. The phone rings. All jump. MISS BROYEUR reaches for the phone at the same time as EDWIN and MYNA.)*

BROYEUR. It's for me!

*(MISS BROYEUR picks up the receiver as EDWIN and MYNA also take hold of it. MISS BROYEUR pulls it away from them.)*

I said it was for ME!

*(SHE brings the receiver to HER ear.)*

Hello, Sir... well... No, it didn't work! Why? They disarmed me, that's why! Not to worry, sir, I didn't fill it, sir. What do you mean by that, sir? Of course, I have!

*(As MISS BROYEUR speaks on the phone, EDWIN runs over to the wall and removes the fire hose. It has a level valve on its nozzle for controlling the spray. HE brings the hose close to MISS BROYEUR.)*

How was I to know? But sir! ... But what if I were to get somebody wet? ... Don't say that about my daddy!

*(EDWIN carefully takes aim at BROYEUR with the hose.)*

EDWIN. Hands up.

*(MISS BROYEUR looks over at MYNA)*

BROYEUR *(to MYNA)*. What did he say?

MYNA. He said, hands up.

BROYEUR. Oh, you're welcome...

*(EDWIN places the nozzle of the hose up to BROYEUR's head.)*

Of course, I know!

*(MISS BROYEUR realizes what has happened.)*

I... I... Uh-oh... Sir... I think, I mean...

*(EDWIN laughs.)*

BROYEUR. Sir, we have a problem...

*(EDWIN takes the receiver from MISS BROYEUR and holds it between HER shoulder and ear. EDWIN listens, then speaks in HIS Fred the Moose voice. MYNA holds the phone in place while EDWIN maintains HIS aim.)*

EDWIN. Really, my darling! For that insult, three black marks and no visit to grandma's.

(EDWIN *returns to HIS own voice.*)

Now, let's not start out on the wrong foot, shall we... Well, seeing that we have a fire hose pointed at Miss Broyeur's head. You've got it, Dr. Heuchler! This is a hostage situation... Well, the same to you! We'll give you till tomorrow, let's say 9:30. Yes, that's in the morning! Skip breakfast! We expect to see you, or else! What do you think?!

(MYNA *slams the receiver down.*)

MYNA. Is he coming?

EDWIN. He said, he'd think about it.

BROYEUR. Bastard!

MYNA. Who said you could talk? Sit down!

(MISS BROYEUR *sits down.* MYNA *talks to EDWIN.*)

What are we going to do with her if he doesn't show?

EDWIN. Hell, if I know. We can't really do anything, can we?

BROYEUR. Damn right you can't!

EDWIN. Silence! This doesn't concern you!

(EDWIN *speaks to MYNA*)

I've got to think about this. Why don't you find something to tie her up with?

MYNA. Sure. Just think up something good.



*(EDWIN ponders the problem for a minute while MYNA looks around for some rope. EDWIN scratches HIS head. Not thinking, HE points the fire hose in MYNA's direction.)*

Edwin, I can't-

*(MYNA sees Edwin scratching HIS head with the gun.)*

Edwin!

EDWIN. What is it?

MYNA. Please be careful with that hose!

EDWIN. Yes, right...

MYNA *(to MISS BROYEUR)*. Help me find something. I need to tie you up. Well, don't just sit there!

*(EDWIN walks over to where HE left the Fred the Moose puppet. HE puts it on HIS hand.)*

Edwin, there's no rope here!

*(MISS BROYEUR finds the roll of masking tape.)*

BROYEUR. Here's some tape.

MYNA. Edwin, will tape work?

*(EDWIN doesn't answer.)*

BROYEUR. Can't you see he's thinking?

MYNA. Yes, that's right. I guess tape will work.

*(MYNA looks at MISS BROYEUR and the tape. MISS BROYEUR shakes HER head.)*

BROYEUR. Some kidnapper you turned out to be.

(MISS BROYEUR *turns around and puts HER hands behind HER back. MYNA pulls out a length of tape, but has problems taping HER hands.*)

BROYEUR. For heaven's sake!

(SHE *snaps the tape that binds HER hands and turns around.*)

Let me show you how it's done. You take a length of tape about this long.

(SHE *pulls out a length of tape.*)

Don't tear it off. See?

MYNA. Yes... I think so...?

BROYEUR. Now, you put your hands behind your back.

(MYNA *puts HER hands behind HER back. MISS BROYEUR starts taping HER hands.*)

Yes, just like that.

EDWIN. OK, Fred, let's see what you have to say...

(EDWIN *uses the FRED voice.*)

FRED. Come around to seein' it my way, buddy boy?

EDWIN. Yes, I guess so. Yes, you're right, always right.

FRED. Cheer up, ole chap, it's not the end of the world. Not while there's Fred the Moose!

(FRED *laughs. HE uses a John Wayne voice.*)

There may be hope for you yet, "pilgrim!"

(FRED *continues to laugh*. EDWIN *starts to sing the Fred the Moose song in HIS own voice, alternating to the Fred voice from time to time.*)

BROYEUR. How's that? Good, huh?

(MYNA *struggles to free herself, but can't.*)

MYNA. You're good! Where did you learn how to do it?

BROYEUR. With the scouts. A girl has to be prepared, you know... This is just masking tape, but it will work if you use enough. Now for the legs.

(SHE *tapes MYNA's legs.*)

FRED. You know what I'd do in a situation like yours? Well, it's really quite simple. Follow your instincts! That's right, Fred the Moose always does what feels right, even if it hurts, Ha-ha... Just a little humor there, pumpkin! I mean, with two women-

(FRED *sings.*)

I'M JUST A VAGABOND LOVER!

(*Speaking*)

Fred the Moose knows, he really knows, he's a "Happening kind of guy!"

(EDWIN *in HIS own voice.*)

I know what you're saying...

(EDWIN *sings again.*)

BROYEUR. There we go. How do you like it?

MYNA. I think I've got it, now. I guess it's your turn, so you can let me go...

BROYEUR. Oh, I forgot one thing. It's really rather special.

(MISS BROYEUR *tapes over MYNA's mouth.*)

EDWIN. Now a little good news... Fred the Moose, your friend and mine are no longer a comedy team. We're of the same "Happening Thing," if you know what I mean. We're going to get along just fine!

(EDWIN *laughs*. EDWIN *talks in HIS Fred voice from now on. From time to time HIS old voice breaks through.*)

Death to the Heuchler! Long live the Moose!

Edwin the Moose!!

BROYEUR. You're a real fool, Ms. Testerman...

(MYNA *is surprised that she was fooled and struggles to get free. MISS BROYEUR exits. EDWIN takes off the hand puppet and sings in the Fred voice.*)

EDWIN. I'm Edwin the Moose!

(*Sings*)

I'M EDWIN THE MOOSE!  
I'M EDWIN THE MOOSE!  
HIDE THE VIRGINS! HIDE THE VIRGINS!  
LOCK UP ALL YOUR BOOZE!

(MYNA *falls off the chair. EDWIN looks around and sees MYNA tied up. HE takes scissors off the SL table. HE cuts loose the tape on HER hands.*)

Well, my friends, it's off to the races! Last one to breakfast is a Heuchler egg!

(EDWIN *rips the tape suddenly off HER mouth.*)

Better than wax, huh?

*(EDWIN runs out of the room. MYNA continues to remove the tape. EDWIN laughs like a cartoon character.)*

looona? You Whooo...

*(Offstage)*

Gotcha, sexy!

BROYEUR *(offstage)*. Put me down!

EDWIN *(offstage)*. Edwin the Moose loves foreplay, he really does!

*(MYNA picks up the roll of tape. EDWIN enters with BROYEUR. MYNA starts winding tape around HER as soon as SHE's on stage.)*

MYNA. The Girl Scouts, huh?

EDWIN. That's right, Myna, use those strong arms! Boys and girls, one and all, Edwin the Moose wants to show you his school project... don't go away!

*(EDWIN starts dumping the contents of a large cardboard box located UC behind the sofa. EDWIN goes behind the sofa. MYNA places the small table CS and gets the horn from the SL table.)*

Is everybody ready?

MYNA *(announcing)*. It's Edwin the Moose!!

*(SHE blows the air horn. EDWIN jumps out from behind the sofa with a construction helmet with moose antlers on HIS head. HE bounds across the room and onto the CS table.)*

EDWIN. And now, a word from our sponsor. Maestro, if you please!

*(MYNA takes a kazoo out of HER pocket, and plays a lively march tune as EDWIN sings.)*

YOU HAVE A PENCIL UP YOUR NOSE, MR. PERFECT PANTS;  
AND YOUR WIFE CLEANS YOUR SHOES WITH GASOLINE.  
ALL YOUR CHILDREN SEE A SHRINK  
THEY DRINK DISHWATER FROM THE SINK;  
AND YOUR NIECE PUT A CONTRACT OUT ON YOU!

O MR. PERFECT PANTS,  
SO WHY CAN'T YOU DANCE,  
EVERYTHING YOU TOUCH  
SMELLS LIKE AFTERSHAVE.

O MR. PERFECT PANTS,  
YOU'LL NOT GET ANOTHER CHANCE;  
MOTHER DOESN'T LOVE YOU ANYMORE.

*(Suddenly changing his voice.)*

Oh Yeah!

BROYEUR. One more time!

EDWIN. Edwin's the name, and play is my game! I am your guru,  
called by God to minister to the needs of women!

*(Rapping)*

Call me "Super-stud," call me "Moose,"  
Call me "Teddy is ready" and "Loose as a goose!"

MYNA. Best not to encourage him. He's a stinker...

*(EDWIN jumps off the sofa. MISS BROYEUR falls into the chair.  
One of HER legs is over the safety line.)*

No! You can't do that! You've crossed the safety line. It's the life  
line!

*(MYNA picks up HER legs and drapes them over the arm of the chair.)*

You know, Miss Iona. Iona Broyeur... We've got a place for troublemakers here.

*(SHE points to a large crate.)*

It's called the "Black Box." Surely, you don't want to be there?

*(MISS BROYEUR shakes HER head.)*

Good. I knew you'd understand. Carry on, then...

EDWIN. Now a spectacle for all!

*(EDWIN picks up a paper bag and pulls out a piece of cake.)*

Pound cake! Eat it, Miss Broyeur!

*(HE forces the pound cake into HER mouth.)*

Sure, eat it all. Make you fat for the kill! When Heuchler walks in and sees you with cake in your mouth - Oh Yes!

*(The phone rings. EDWIN reaches for the phone.)*

MYNA. Not yet!! Wait for the seventh ring!

*(THEY wait. It only rings six times. EDWIN speaks in his normal voice.)*

EDWIN Only six? What time is it, Myna?

MYNA. Nine twenty-five, dear...

EDWIN. Five more minutes...

*(HE picks up the fire hose. HE points it at MISS BROYEUR.)*

EDWIN: Do you think I could do it? She's not really a bad sort...  
Hmmm?

MYNA. Remember what Fred said, "Follow your instincts!"

EDWIN. Right! The instincts, indeed!

*(EDWIN returns to HIS Fred the Moose voice.)*

Now, an exhibition for all! Boys and girls, one and all, Edwin the Moose has a treat for you! Myna! My Milly-Molly-Myna, take off your clothes!

*(MYNA acts as if this is another sexual game.)*

MYNA *(feigning dismay)*. What?

EDWIN. You heard me, beef stock! Take off your clothes!

*(evil laugh)*

I demand it!

*(In the style of a televangelist)*

God demands it!

MYNA *(smiling slyly)*. Never!

*(EDWIN points the fire hose at MYNA from between HIS legs.)*

EDWIN. Perhaps the "Black Box" suits your fancy? It can be so enlightening. C'mon, girl, show Daddy what you're made of. I command you in the name of Atlas!

*(MYNA, teasingly, starts to unbutton HER clothes.)*

MYNA *(smiling broadly)* Beast!

EDWIN. A true disciple, you are. Daddy is pleased...



MYNA (*with a grin*). Go to hell...

EDWIN. Now, take it off! Hurry up, girl, the viewers at home expect a season finale!

(*The phone rings again.*)

MYNA (*frustrated*). Damn! Just like at home-

BROYEUR. Don't wait for the seventh ring!

(*EDWIN points the fire hose at MISS BROYEUR. HE picks up the receiver on the seventh ring. EDWIN returns to normal voice.*)

EDWIN. Hello... Oh, it's you!

(*In HIS Fred the Moose voice.*)

Well, it's getting a little late, isn't it? You're not coming?! ... Why, I mean... I'll wash her brains out! ... Go ahead?! ... I'll wash both their brains out! ... Go ahead?!

(*MYNA falls back on the sofa covering her face.*)

... You're mad! ... What if I flush my OWN damned brains out?! Hello?

(*HE holds the nozzle of the mouth up to HIS ear as if it was an old fashion telephone mouthpiece.*)

... Hello? He hung up?!

MYNA (*thinking it's still roleplaying*). What are you going to do to us, Edwin?

EDWIN. You... what?

(*EDWIN drops the hose. HE has regressed into a childlike state.*)

EDWIN (cont.) I don't believe it! He has us, all the way... He doesn't come when we do what he wants; he doesn't come when we rebel against him; we can't threaten or coerce him.

(MYNA *stands up. SHE is concerned at this point.*)

Yet everything we do degrades us...

(MISS BROYEUR *looks at MYNA with a fearful look on her face.*)

BROYEUR. Look at his eyes... He's having a breakdown!

MYNA. Edwin?

(EDWIN *starts singing in HIS own voice, weak, the Fred the Moose song.*)

Edwin... I want to get out of here!

EDWIN. We can't! It isn't over!

MYNA. I'm going, Edwin... With or without you.

(MYNA *moves back. EDWIN starts toward HER.*)

EDWIN. You can't leave! It isn't safe for us!

MYNA. No, it isn't!

(MYNA *picks up the fire hose.*)

EDWIN. I need that, Myna...

MYNA. We should quit right now! You see this?

(MYNA *opens the nozzle of the fire hose. Nothing happens.*)

There's pressure, but it's rigged. No water comes out. It is all a game... a television show!

EDWIN. No, it is not a game!

BROYEUR. It really is a game. All those people out there are watching us. Do you remember? The ratings have really been high since the other couples dropped out.

EDWIN. Other couples?

MYNA. Yes. Remember the other couples?

EDWIN. You're trying to trick me!

*(There is a creaking sound offstage)*

No! They're back! The spies are after our underwear!

MYNA. Quick, into the box, Edwin! It'll be safe in there... for you...

*(EDWIN grabs up his clean underwear and rushes into the cardboard "Black Box." Inside, HE weakly mumbles the Fred the Moose song.)*

Safe now, honey?

*(MYNA closes the box.)*

BROYEUR *(babbling nervously)*. Good for you! That's the way, girl! We can split the prize money. You're going places, I tell you. Maybe, you'll own your own company someday? Huh, what do you think?

*(MYNA starts to exit.)*

Say, where are you going?

MYNA. To hell.

BROYEUR. Say, you want to free me before you go? ...

*(MYNA exits without a word.)*

Hey, wait a minute! Come back! Please don't leave me here like this! What if he gets out of there?!

*(The phone starts to ring.)*

At last!

*(SHE tries to hop over to the phone, but falls back in the chair. SHE struggles to free HER hands and feet, but can't. The phone stops ringing. A pause.)*

The cameras! They'll see me on the cameras!

*(SHE tries to stand. She displays a frustration and anger.)*

Dr. Heuchler? Dr. Heuchler, I'm tied up and Ms. Testerman left the building, and Mr. Testerman is in a box. He has lost it! Please, send somebody over to help me-

*(The lights above HER are turned off. There is the sound of a breaker box switch being thrown. Only dim safety lights are on.)*

Dr. Heuchler? ... Dr. Heuchler!

EDWIN (in Fred voice). You Whooo... Iooona?

(BLACKOUT. END OF PLAY)